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## *A measure of dissent*

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### **Body**

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More than 1,000 signatories, including climate scientists and other experts, have endorsed a "World Climate Declaration," asserting that there is no present climate emergency. The foundation Climate Intelligence (CLINTEL) produced a one-page statement arguing that climate science should be less political and more open about the many uncertainties in predictions of global temperature changes and more comprehensive in judging the costs and benefits of proposed policy measures, especially radical reductions in the use of fossil fuels. CLINTEL was founded in 2019 by geophysics professor Guus Berkhout and science journalist Marcel Crok. Both men are Dutch and Prof. Berkhout is an 82-year-old former petroleum engineer; Crok is a journalist who has frequently criticized what he regards as the incompleteness and deliberate inaccuracy of alarmist reports about the climate.

They are not convinced that CO2 is the principal agent of contemporary climate change, but whether it is or not, they have concluded that increases in CO2 emissions and the very modest rise in the world's temperature over the last 90 years are not harmful to nature. Crok stated in an email to the Epoch Times that, "The climate hysteria surrounding the topic is totally unjustified (and) the 'cure'- getting rid of fossil fuels ASAP and replacing them with renewables - probably will be worse than the 'disease.'" They circulated their succinct summary and as of Aug. 23 had received 1,152 signatures.

Crok acknowledged that advocates of proactive fossil fuel reduction had objected to CLINTEL's findings and had particularly made a point of the fact that many of the 1,152 signatories are not now active climate scientists and that many are retired. He said that both these claims "are true and very understandable," by which he meant that the status of many of the paper's supporters is understandable, not the activists' objections to them. He explained that the majority of working climate scientists today rely on government money for their income and that climate activists are so zealous and aggressive, those who dissent from the conventional wisdom do so at risk of their jobs. Crok made the point that activists dominate the media and academia and almost never engage in direct debate with those who consider the possibility that a less alarmist view than the conventional wisdom is not just a cranky denial of "settled science."

The activist leadership rely on their domination of the media to discredit the dissent as coming either from parties financially interested in traditional energy sources, or eccentric or even mad contrarians. Many commentators, however, have pointed out that these decades of mistaken dire predictions of imminent climate disaster are bound to incite skepticism. The climate disaster has supposedly been imminent for over 50 years.

Former U.S. vice-president Al Gore, who has made himself a centimillionaire from his decades of doom-laden climate jeremiads, produced his film An Inconvenient Truth 20 years ago. It made a number of alarmist claims, including whole cities under water and frequent super-hurricanes, that never materialized. It has been well over a decade since the Prince of Wales warned us the end was nigh and that we would all be doomed within "less than

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100 months" without drastic conservationist measures. It has been more than 15 years since then-British prime minister Tony Blair, otherwise a sensible man, wrote to European leaders warning that, "We have a window of only 10-15 years to take the steps we need to avoid crossing catastrophic tipping points."

Of course, the fact that all of this has proved to be nonsense, as many people at the time evidently believed it to be, does not mean that there is no truth to any of it. Not a single person in the world approves of the pollution of the air and water, and in many countries, great and gratifying progress has been made in cleaning up the environment. But it is becoming increasingly obvious, especially in western Europe and more recently in the United States, that the sensible majority of citizens will not tolerate the unsustainable increases in the cost of normal life inflicted on all of our societies by a headlong rush into sustainable energy. Fossil fuel, carefully contained and incentivized to have as little damaging impact as possible on the environment, is about to make an irresistible political comeback. The appointment this week of climate skeptic Jacob Rees-Mogg as Britain's secretary of state for business, energy and industrial strategy, which is responsible for energy and climate policy, is a portent of this.

The eco-zealots have refused for 30 years to acknowledge that we absolutely do not have any precise predictions of where present climate trends may lead. It is hard to argue with CLINTEL's statement that "the gap between the real world and the modelled world tells us that we are far from understanding climate change. ... Climate models have many shortcomings and are not remotely plausible as global policy tools."

The CLINTEL paper continues to attract learned supporters and it warns that, "Climate science has degenerated into a discussion based on beliefs, not on sound self-critical science." What we need is research; the current bum's rush toward the suppression of petroleum-based energy is a potentially mortal self-inflicted economic assault conducted by a ramshackle spontaneous coalition of authentic conservationists, naturalist fantasists, credulous faddists, resourceful Marxists and a generality of anti-capitalists. No country has been more profoundly afflicted by this planetary blunder than Canada, and no large country is less offensive to the environment or better placed to lead serious objective research to assure that humanity responds constructively to climate issues. It is needless to add that the current federal government has not only missed the policy bus; it has embarked on a dysfunctional policy leading away from where we should be aspiring to go: achieving adequate knowledge to enact the best policy.

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## Graphic

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Ed Jones, Afp Via Getty Images Files; Eco-zealots have refused for 30 years to acknowledge that we absolutely do not have any precise predictions of where present climate trends may lead, Conrad Black writes.;

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